4. Using a Dictionary

As you probably know, a dictionary gives the meanings and correct spelling of words. In addition, the dictionary:

■ Tells how to pronounce, or say, the word.

■ Gives the many different meanings a word may have.

■ Tells whether the word is a noun, a verb, an adjective, or an adverb.

The words in a dictionary are listed in alphabetical order. For example, the word zest comes after zap and before zip.

Here’s an example of the top part of a dictionary page:

Guide word, left: This tells the first word on this dictionary page.

Guide word, right: This tells the last word on this dictionary page.

This tells the correct pronunciation of the word. The dots separate the three syllables.

This means the word is usually used as a noun.

Here are the different meanings of the word.

Words and Meanings

adj. — adjective
adv. — adverb
n. — noun
pronunciation — saying the word correctly
A. On the lines, write the following words in alphabetical order. Some words start with the same letter. You will have to look at the second or third letters in these words.

harvest  mother  last
distance  pitch  pity
escape  disturb  least
patch  worry  morning

1. __________________  7. ________________
2. __________________  8. ________________
3. __________________  9. ________________
4. __________________ 10. ________________
5. __________________ 11. ________________
6. __________________ 12. ________________

B. Look below at the guide words from a dictionary page. Then look at Words to List. Put the words in the right order under the guide words. Remember, the guide word on the left is the first word on the page. The guide word on the right is the last word on the page.

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Words to List

prohibit  progress  profuse
program  progeny  profusion

C. Read each sentence. Choose the best meaning for the underlined word. Circle your choice.

1. A new wave of students will enter this year.
   a moving hand
   b moving water
   c group

2. Their names are alphabetized on the roll at the office.
   a official list
   b push over
   c kind of bread

3. The principle course I am taking is Law Enforcement.
   a head of a school
   b rule
   c most important

4. There is a current need for more protection in the city.
   a present time
   b flowing water
   c electric power
A. 1. distance  2. disturb  3. escape  
   4. harvest  5. last  6. least  
   7. morning  8. mother  9. patch  
   10. pitch  11. pity  12. worry  
B. profuse, profusion, progeny, program, progress, prohibit  
C. 1. c  2. a  3. c  4. a